

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 USUN N 00148 01 OF 02 180229Z
ACTION IO-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-07
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15
USIA-06 AF-10 ARA-10 EA-10 EUR-12 NEA-10 TRSE-00
COME-00 HA-05 ACDA-12 /130 W
-----037244 180318Z /63
R 172327Z JAN 78
FM USMISSION USUN NEW YORK
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9103

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 USUN 0148

DEPT PASS AFRICAN POSTS AS APPROPRIATE

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: AF, PORG
SUBJECT: MISSION ASSESSMENT: AFRICAN ISSUES DURING THE 32ND UNGA

SUMMARY: THE FOLLOWING IS THE MISSION'S ASSESSMENT OF
AFRICAN ISSUES DURING THE 32ND UNGA. WE FARED WELL THIS
YEAR BECAUSE OUR ACTIONS IN NEW YORK DIRECTLY REFLECTED
US POLICIES TOWARD AFRICA WHICH ARE
MORE SENSITIVE TO AFRICAN ASPIRATIONS
AND MORE CONSTRUCTIVE IN THEIR SEARCH FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE
PARAMOUNT PROBLEMS ON THAT CONTINENT. OVERALL, OUR INVOLVEMENT
IN WESTERN INITIATIVES IN RHODESIA AND NAMIBIA GOT
FAVORABLE TREATMENT IN NEW YORK. AFRICAN CRITICISMS OF US
DURING THE UNGA CENTERED ON OUR INABILITY TO ACCEPT MEASURES
AGAINST SOUTH AFRICA THEY DEEMED NECESSARY AND APPROPRIATE.
WE TOOK A STRONG LEADERSHIP ROLE AMONG THE WESTERN FIVE ON
AFRICAN ISSUES, BUT NOT WITHOUT TOUCHING A FEW RAW NERVES
AMONG OUR ALLIES. END SUMMARY.

1. THE SETTING: HERALDED BY LAST SPRING'S PRESIDENTIAL
HUMAN RIGHTS STATEMENTS AND THE MONDALE/VORSTER MEETING,
US AFRICAN POLICIES, IN OUR VIEW, GREW STEADILY IN 1977
FROM SOLID ROOTS -- THE NATURAL ALIGNMENT OF OUR OWN VALUES
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 USUN N 00148 01 OF 02 180229Z

WITH AFRICAN ASPIRATIONS FOR SELF- DETERMINATION AND MAJORITY
RULE, AN APPRECIATION OF THE ECONOMIC POTENTIAL OF BLACK
AFRICA, AND OUR OWN SELF-CONFIDENCE THAT US EMPATHY, COOPER-
ATION AND ECONOMIC EXPERTISE WERE VITAL TOOLS IN BUILDING
THE STABLE POLITICAL STRUCTURE IN AFRICA WE SOUGHT. THOUGH
THEY ARE OBVIOUSLY PLEASED WITH CHANGED US STATEMENTS,
INITIATIVES AND ATTITUDES ON AFRICA IN 1977. AFRICAN

SKEPTICISM OF THE US ROLE IN AFRICA, WHILE DIMINISHED, REMAINS. THE SHARPEST AND MOST PERVASIVE AFRICAN CRITISM OF US POLICY TOWARD AFRICA IN 1977 REMAINED FOCUSED ON OUR CONTINUING INABILITY TO DIMINISH OUR ECONOMIC INVOLVEMENT WITH THE AFRICAANER REGIME IN SOUTH AFRICA.

2. LARGELY BECAUSE OF THE PRIORITIES OF THE NEW LEADERSHIP IN THE WHITE HOUSE AND IN THE MISSION, OTHER DEL-EGATIONS CORRECTLY SAW US VOTES AND SPEECHES ON AFRICAN ITEMS DURING THE 32ND UNGA AS DIRECT MANIFESTATIONS OF THE NEW US POLICIES TOWARD THAT CONTINENT AND NOT AS IS LATED TACTICS DEVELOPED TO BUY TIME OR SURVIVE DEBATES IN NEW YORK. AS A RESULT, US FORTUNES ON AFRICAN ISSUES THIS FALL AT THE UN ACCURATELY REFLECTED THE PERCEPTIONS OF OTHERS OF THE CURRENT STATE OF THOSE NEW POLICIES -- HOPEFUL, SENSITIVE, AND MATURING.

3. RHODESIA AND NAMIBIA: IN OUR VIEW, THE KEY ROLE THE US CONTINUES TO PLAY IN PEACE NEGOTIATIONS IN BOTH RHODESIA AND NAMIBIA HAS EARNED US A REAL AND GROWING DEGREE OF RESPECT AMONG AFRICANS ON THOSE ISSUES. AT A MINIMUM THEY HAVE SO FAR BEEN WILLING TO GIVE THE WESTERN PEACE INITIATIVES TIME TO BE TESTED FAIRLY. THE DEBATES ON

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 USUN N 00148 01 OF 02 180229Z

RHODESIA IN THE FOURTH COMMITTEE AND ON NAMIBIA IN PLENARY DURING THE GA WERE ROUTINE AFFAIRS, EVIDENCING A DECIDED UNWILLINGNESS, BENEATH THE PRO FORMA RHETORIC, TO RISK SIGNIFICANT CRITICISM OF THE WESTERN EFFORT. ON THE CONTRARY, MANY AFRICAN REPRESENTATIVES SPOKE WITH FAVOR OF THE WESTERN PEACE INITIATIVES; ONLY A FEW ON THE FRINGE DIRECTLY ATTACKED THEM OR THEIR SPONSORS. THERE WAS SOME SENSE IN THE CORRIDORS OF THE ACKNOWLEDGED IRRELEVANCE OF GENERAL ASSEMBLY TREATMENT OF THESE ISSUES IN THE FACE OF ONGOING NEGOTIATIONS AND POSSIBLE SECURITY COUNCIL ACTION. THOSE WHO TOOK PAINS TO BE THOUGHTFUL AND CONSTRUCTIVE IN THEIR SPEECHES BY AND LARGE SERVED NOTICE THAT AFRICA WAS WATCHING THE NEGOTIATIONS CLOSELY, WAS WORRIED ABOUT WESTERN RESOLVE, AND WOULD NOT HESITATE TO TRY TO PUSH US TO STIFFER STEPS IF THE NEGOTIATIONS FALTERED.

4. THE WORK OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL'S SANCTIONS COMMITTEE THIS FALL WAS A PALE, POLITE SHADOW OF ITS FORMER SELF. CONFRONTED BY US AND UK REFUSALS TO TAKE UP THE DISCUSSION OF EXPANDED SANCTIONS ON RHODESIA WHILE NEGOTIATIONS ON THAT SITUATION WERE IN PROGRESS, THE COMMITTEE, WITH SOME GRUMB-

LING, ACQUIESCED. COMMITTEE WORK FINISHED THREE WEEKS
EARLY WITH AN ABSENCE OF RANCOR THAT OLD-TIMERS TERMED
UNPRECEDENTED.

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 USUN N 00148 02 OF 02 180259Z
ACTION IO-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-07
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15
USIA-06 AF-10 ARA-10 EA-10 EUR-12 NEA-10 TRSE-00
COME-00 HA-05 ACDA-12 /130 W
-----037463 180317Z /63

R 172327Z JAN 78
FM USMISSION USUN NEW YORK
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9104

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 USUN 0148

DEPT PASS AFRICAN POSTS AS APPROPRIATE

5. SOUTH AFRICA: US POLICIES TOWARD APARTHEID DREW BOTH
PRASIE AND BLAME THIS FALL IN NEW YORK. MANY AFRICANS
UNDERSTOOD AND APPRECIATED THE FACT THAT US CONDEMNATIONS
OF APARTHEID WERETOUGHED BY FAR THIS YEAR THAN BEFORE, AND
THAT A NEW ADMINISTRATION, IN LESS THAN ONE YEAR, COULD NOT
BE EXPECTED TO SHIFT A NATIONAL CONSCIOUSNESS WHICH HAD
LARGELY BEEN INURED TO RACIAL INJUSTICE IN SOUTH AFRICA.
IN AN UNPRECEDENTED STEP, THE NIGERIAN CHAIRMAN OF THE
COMMITTEE AGAINST APARTHEID SINGLED OUT THE US FOR PUBLIC
PRAISE FOR ITS FAR MORE POSITIVE VOTES ON THIS YEAR'S
COLLECTION OF PLENARY ANTI-APARTHEID RESOLUTIONS.

6. AND IN THE SECURITY COUNCIL, AFRICANS SAW AND APPRE-
CIATED THE US AS THE DRIVING FORCE BEHIND WESTERN AGREE-
MENT TO AN ARMS EMBARGO ON SOUTH AFRICA. STILL, WE CAME
UNDER STRONG CRITICISM FOR OUR REFUSAL TO END ECONOMIC
LINKS WITH SOUTH AFRICA. ON THIS ISSUE, THERE IS NOT AS
YET A VIABLE MIDDLE GROUND. THE BITTEREST CRITIQUES OF
US THIS FALL BY AFRICANS WERE ON THE ISSUES OF OUR
ECONOMIC AND, TO A LESSER EXTENT, OUR PEACEFUL NUCLEAR
COOPERATION WITH SOUTH AFRICA -- BOTH DURING THE SECURITY
COUNCIL'S DEBATE ON SOUTH AFRICA AND THE 4TH COMMITTEE'S
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 USUN N 00148 02 OF 02 180259Z

TREATMENT OF THE ECONOMIC
ISSUES OF DECOLONIZATION.

7. OTHER ISSUES: FOR ANOTHER GROUP OF AFRICAN ISSUES AT THE UN, AFRICAN SENTIMENT WAS STRONG THAT "OUTSIDERS" AND PARTICULARLY "SUPER POWERS" NOT BECOME INVOLVED. THUS THE SAHARA WAS DISCUSSED ONLY GINGERLY AND THAT HORN OF AFRICA VIRTUALLY ESCAPED FORMAL UN ATTENTION. IN THE NIGER-NIGERIA SECURITY COUNCIL SEAT CONTROVERSY, WHERE OUR ACTIVE INTEREST WAS PERCEIVED BY SOME AFRICANS AS INTRUDING, UNINVITED, INTO THEIR "INTERNAL AFFAIRS, WE WERE SHARPLY BUT POLITELY CRITICIZED, DESPITE SUBSTANTIAL PRIVATE AFRICAN SHARING OF OUR INTEREST. IN THE AREA OF HUMAN RIGHTS IN AFRICA, ANOTHER REALM IN WHICH NON-INTERFERENCE IS CHERISHED, THE SITUATION IN UGANDA SURFACED TOWARD THE END OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY. WHEN THENORDICS SPONSORED A RESOLUTION REQUESTING AN INVESTIGATION OF THE SITUATION, WE ADOPTED AN ACTIVE BUT DECIDEDLY BEHIND-THE-SCENES ROLE. WE BECAME MORE VISIBLE IN OUR EFFORTS ON BEHALF OF A NIGERIAN SPIN-OFF RESOLUTION CALLING FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF REGIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSIONS WHERE THEY DO NOT ALREADY EXIST. IN BOTH OF THESE CASES WE SOUGHT REAL IMPROVEMENTS IN HUMAN RIGHTS WITH THE UNDERSTANDING THAT AN OVERLY DIRECT US INVOLVEMENT COULD BE DETRIMENTAL.

8. SOVIET REACTION: OUR INTERESTS REGARDING AFRICA SUFFERED VERY LITTLE FROM SOVIET OR, EVEN LESS, CHINESE ATTACKS AT THE UN THIS FALL. COMMITTED TO FOLLOWING AN AFRICAN LEAD ON SOUTHERN AFRICAN ISSUES, THE SOVIETS, SO LONG AS AFRICAN ATTITUDES TOWARDS OUR INITIATIVES WERE BASICALLY SUPPORTIVE, WERE LEFT CARPING FROM THE BLEACKERS, SCORING A POINT ONLY WHEN THE FIVE WESTERN MEMBERS OF
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 USUN N 00148 02 OF 02 180259Z

THE SECURITY COUNCIL WERE FORCED TO VOTE AGAINST AFRICAN-SPONSORED RESOLUTIONS FOR SANCTIONS ON SOUTH AFRICA. EVEN HERE, SOVIET POLICY WAS LIMITED TO FOLLOWING AN AFRICAN LEAD, WITH LITTLE OR NO ROOM FOR INDEPENDENT SOVIET INITIATIVES. THE CHINESE HAD EVEN LESS TO SAY ON SOUTHERN AFRICA. WHEN THEY DID SPEAK, IT WAS THE SOVIETS, NOT US, WHO WERE THEIR FAVORITE TARGETS.

9. WESTERN REACTIONS: US RELATIONS WITH OTHER WESTERN MEMBERS OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL ON AFRICAN ISSUES WERE COOPERATIVE BUT TOUCHY THIS FALL. OUR FRENCH AND

ESPECIALLY OUR BRITISH COLLEAGUES KNOW FULL WELL THAT AFRICANS PRIVATELY CRITICIZE THE INFLUENCE THESE MORE CONSERVATIVE EUROPEAN STATES HAVE ON US POLICY TOWARD SOUTHERN AFRICA. FRANCE AND BRITAIN, CERTAINLY, HAVE RESENTED BEING PULLED IN MORE LIBERAL DIRECTIONS BY US THAN THEY ARE WONT TO GO ON THEIR OWN. ALL OF THE OTHER WESTERN FIVE HAVE CRITICIZED US FOR LACK OF FOREWARNING OF AMERICAN POLICY SHIFTS
N AFRICAN ISSUES. NONETHE-
LESS, OUR POLICIES AND INITIATIVES THIS YEAR AND AFRICAN SUPPORT FOR THEM HAVE PUT US IN A POSITION OF DE FACTO LEADERSHIP OF THE WESTERN FIVE FOR AFRICAN ISSUES AT THE UN.

10. CONCLUSION: IN SUM, THIS WAS A "GOOD GA" FOR US ON AFRICAN ISSUES BECAUSE OUR POSITIONS HERE MIMIC THE STRENGTH OF OUR EVOLVING POLICIES FOR THAT CONTINENT. AS THESE POLICIES CONTINUE TO BUILD A POSITIVE, CONSTRUCTIVE RECORD, FUTURE GENERAL ASSEMBLIES WILL BE EVEN BETTER. IF NEGOTIATIONS IN SOUTHERN AFRICA SOUR, ON THE OTHER HAND, AND WE ARE FAULTED, AN AFRICAN BACKLASH COULD QUICKLY UNDERMINE THE DEGREE OF COOPERATION WE ACHIEVED THIS YEAR IN NEW YORK. REGARDING SOUTH AFRICA, EACH NEW CRISIS WILL REVIVE THE INEVITABLE TENSIONS AT THE UN BETWEEN AN AFRICAN DEMAND FOR ISOLATING SOUTH AFRICA ON THE ONE HAND AND AMERICAN COMMITMENT
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 04 USUN N 00148 02 OF 02 180259Z

TO MODERATE SOLUTIONS AND COMPLETING POLICY OBJECTIVES ON THE OTHER.

YOUNG

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: POLITICAL SUMMARIES, POLITICAL SITUATION
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 17 jan 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978USUNN00148
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780025-1019
Format: TEL
From: USUN NEW YORK
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780152/aaaabsfx.tel
Line Count: 259
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 65becfe2-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION IO
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 5
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 21 jul 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3759092
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: MISSION ASSESSMENT: AFRICAN ISSUES DURING THE 32ND UNGA SUMMARY: THE FOLLOWING IS THE MISSION'S ASSESSMENT OF AFRICAN ISSUES DURING THE 32ND UNGA. WE FARED WELL
TAGS: PORG, PDEV, PEPR, AF, UNGA
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/65becfe2-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014